

Dr. Adam J. Burgasser

Short Narrative Biography

Dr. Adam Burgasser is a Professor of Physics at UC San Diego and an observational astrophysicist investigating the lowest mass stars, coldest brown dwarfs, and exoplanets. He uses a variety of ground-based and space-based telescopes to discover and research the physical properties of these objects across the electromagnetic spectrum. He has authored or co-authored over 175 peer-reviewed publications over his career, including contributions to the discovery of seven Earth-sized planets around the nearby low-mass star TRAPPIST-1. Dr. Burgasser also conducts education research in physics, examining cooperative and flipped-model learning strategies in large-format physics courses; and interdisciplinary research along the science-art continuum, examining data-driven artforms, trans-sensory perception, and participatory public science-art installations. In 2016, he was awarded UCSD's Distinguished Teaching Award.

Dr. Burgasser is committed to improving equity and inclusion in the sciences, by identifying and addressing barriers for underrepresented groups. He has chaired the American Astronomical Society (AAS) Committee on the Status of Minorities in Astronomy, directs the UC-HBCU UCSD-Morehouse-Spelman Physics Bridge Program, and was part of the organizing committee that hosted the first Inclusive Astronomy conference at Vanderbilt University in 2015. In 2014, he was awarded the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action and Diversity Award at UC San Diego for his diversity and outreach work.

Dr. Burgasser earned his B.S. in Physics at UC San Diego in 1996, where he was also a national champion springboard diver and recipient of the NCAA Top VII award. He earned his Ph.D. in Physics (with a specialization in Planetary Science) from the California Institute of Technology in 2001. Dr. Burgasser conducted postgraduate work as a Hubble Postdoctoral Fellow at UC Los Angeles and a Spitzer Postdoctoral Fellow at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. He has held faculty positions in the Departments of Physics at MIT and UC San Diego. In 2017, he was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to conduct research at the University of Exeter.

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